

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 IO-06 NEA-07 INR-05

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSC-05 SP-02 PM-03 L-01 PA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PIRORITY 726

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SANA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NY PRIORITY

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

S E C R E T DJIBOUTI 316

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PDIP, PINS, MOPS, ASEC, DJ, SO, ET

SUBJ: SULTAN ALI MIRAH ARRIVES FROM MOGADISCIO

REF: STATE 051045, DJIBOUTI 234 (NOTAL)

1. LIKE A BAD PENNY, SULTAN ALI MIRAH, TITULAR LEADER OF THE
ANTI-ADDIS ABABA AFARS OF AOUSSA PROVINCE, ETHIOPIA, SHOWED UP

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AT LOYADA BORDER CROSSING STATION AT THE SOMALI FRONTIER DURING
MORNING OF 9 MARCH. POST HAD HEARD RECENTLY OF HIS PRESENCE IN
MOGADISCIO, AND EVIDENTLY HE CROSSED SOMALIA 1200 MILES BY
ROAD TO ARRIVE AT DJIBOUTI THIS MORNING. AS EMBASSY EARLIER ASSUMED,
THE VISIT OF SULTAN ALI MIRAH WAS EVIDENTLY COOKED UP IN
MOGADISCIO TO INSURE MAXIMUM DIFFICULTY FOR THE DJIBOUTI
GOVERNMENT IN ATTEMPTING TO RE-ESTABLISH ITS TATTERED TIES WITH

ETHIOPIA.

2. THE ARRIVAL OF THE SULTAN CAUSED MORE THAN A LITTLE CONSTERNATION IN LOCAL OFFICIAL CIRCLES. CHARGE WAS PRESENT IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE WHEN PRIME MINISTER ABDALLAH KAMIL DISCUSSED WITH HIS GOOD FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE, MIN INTERIOR MOUMIN BAHDON, HOW TO HANDLE PROBLEM. APPARENTLY, THE SOLUTION THEY ARE WORKING ON NOW IS TO TAKE THE SULTAN WITH THEM WHEN THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER LEAVE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 12, FOR A TEN-DAY TOUR TO PERSIAN GULF STATES. THEY THEN PLAN TO DROP HIM OFF IN JIDDA ON THE WAY BACK, WITH FIRM REQUEST THAT HIS NEXT TRIP TO DJIBOUTI BE MADE THROUGH PROPER CHANNELS AND NOT VIA THE BACK DOOR. WHETHER THIS PLAN WILL WORK OUT OR NOT IS OBVIOUSLY NOT YET CLEAR, BUT THE PRIME MINISTER MADE IT EVIDENT THAT THEY DO NOT WANT THE SULTAN IN DJIBOUTI WHILE THEY ARE OUT OF THE COUNTRY. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THEY COULD NOT SIMPLY PROCLAIM HIM A PROHIBITED IMMIGRANT BECAUSE THAT COULD MAKE TOO MUCH LOCAL TROUBLE WITH AFARS WHO STILL SUPPORT THE SULTAN.

3. COMMENT: WHILE EXAMINING THE PROBLEM OF SULTAN ALI MIRAH, THE DEPARTMENT COULD MOST PROFITABLY LOOK AT THE OBVIOUSLY RELATED PROBLEM OF THE EXTENT OF SOMALI UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY HAVE BEEN DEFEATED IN THEIR QUIXOTIC DREAM OF REALIZING SOMALI UNITY BY MILITARY MEANS. OBVIOUSLY, AT SOME POINT OR ANOTHER, WE WILL BE OBLIGED TO TAKE SOME ACTIONS EITHER
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OPENLY OR INDIRECTLY TO BUOY UP THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT TO PRESERVE IT FROM FALLING BACK INTO SOVIET HANDS. JUDGING BY OUR RANGE OF EXPERIENCES WITH THEM, THEIR LACK OF PLANNING IN THEIR OGADEN CAMPAIGN, THEIR MEDDLING IN DJIBOUTI AND ELSEWHERE, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO BARTER WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH. IT IS THE HOPE OF THIS EMBASSY, AND IMPLICITLY THE HOPE OF NEARLY ALL OF THE DJIBOUTI LEADERS WE DEAL WITH, THAT SOME FORMULA CAN BE FOUND TO PURSUADE THE SOMALIS TO LET UP ON THEIR TROUBLE-MAKING IN DJIBOUTI. MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE IRKSOME ALI MIRAH PROBLEM, OF COURSE, IS THE MATTER OF SECURITY ON THE RAILWAY, A MATTER THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED IN DJIBOUTI 250. POST WOULD LIKE TO BE ADVISED OF ANY MOVES TO NEUTRALIZE THE SOMALIS IN THE POST OGADEN-WAR PERIOD WHILE ENCOURAGING THEM NOT TO RESUME OLD FRIENDSHIPS. WE REMAIN CONVINCED THAT AN INDEPENDENT PEACEFUL DJIBOUTI IS OBJECTIVELY OF GREATER VALUE TO BOTH ADDIS ABABA AND MOGADISCIO THAN THE CONTRARY. WE THINK, ON THE WHOLE, THAT THE ETHIOPIANS ARE LIKELY TO ACCEPT THE PREMISE MORE EASILY THAN THE SOMALIS.
CLARKE

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NNN

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